

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 PARIS 07383 252224Z

64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01

/114 W

----- 083427

R 251740Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7799

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

UNCLAS PARIS 7383

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: FORCE OUVRIERE PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 21

1. SUMMARY. FORCE OUVRIERE'S SECRETARY GENERAL ANDRE BERGERON TOLD PRESS MARCH 22 THAT FO REGARDS GOF'S ANTI-INFLATION MEASURES AS INADEQUATE RESPONSE BY DIVIDED GOVERNMENT AT LOSS HOW TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM. FO, WHILE DEFENDING WORKERS' INTERESTS, WILL ACT WITH PRUDENCE, RECOGNIZING THAT DECLINING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS COUPLED WITH SERIOUS PROBLEM OF INFLATION COULD RESULT IN CHAOTIC SITUATION LEADING TO AUTHORITARIAN REGIME. END SUMMARY.

2. FORCE OUVRIERE SECRETARY GENERAL ANDRE BERGERON, OPENED A PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARIS MARCH 21, WITH AN EXPRESSION OF FO'S SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT THE CURRENT DETERIORATION OF FRANCE'S POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH THREATEN THE COUNTRY WITH WHEN CHAOS CONDUCTIVE TO AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME. IN A DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE DECLINE OF PARLIAMENT BERGERON SAID THAT, "WHEN PARLIAMENT NO LONGER PLAYS ITS ROLE, THERE IS A DANGER THAT CONFRONTATION WILL MOVE TO THE STREETS."

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 PARIS 07383 252224Z

3. ANTI-INFLATION MEASURES, DEVELOPED WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH LABOR, AND ANNOUNCED BY GOVERNMENT MARCH 20, IS CASE IN POINT, SAID BERGERON. THOUGH FO REGARDS MEASURES (PARIS 7067) AS INADEQUATE RESPONSE TO PROBLEM OF INFLATION, IT WILL NOT SEEK TO EXPLOIT A DIFFICULT SITUATION FOR SHORT TERM ADVANTAGE, AS THIS MIGHT LEAD TO AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME. IN FO'S VIEW, SOME CAUSES OF INFLATION ARE INTERNATIONAL, SOME INTERNAL. GOVERNMENT HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO BRING PRICES UNDER CONTROL. THOUGH RECOGNIZING THIS, FO WILL CONTINUE TO PROTECT WORKERS' INTERESTS, ACTING PRUDENTLY, BUT WITH FIRM ATTACHMENT TO CONTRACTUAL POLICY - INCLUDING PROVISION FOR SOME INCREMENT IN PURCHASING POWER. FO REMAINS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO INCOMES POLICY MAINLY BECAUSE SUCH A POLICY COULD BE ENFORCED ONLY BY A DICTATORSHIP.

4. ASKED TO COMMENT ON MESSMER'S STATEMENT THAT FRANCE COULD NO MORE THAN SEEK TO MAINTAIN WORKER PURCHASING POWER AT PRESENT LEVELS, BERGERON REPLIED THAT, WERE HE PRIME MINISTER, HE WOULD NOT HAVE MADE SUCH A STATEMENT. CONTINUING, BERGERON INDICATED THAT FO HAS ASSURANCES THAT, WHERE ALREADY SIGNED, CONTRACTS INCLUDING PROGRESSION CLAUSES WILL BE HONORED. ONE WOULD SIMPLY HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE HOW CONFLICTING STATEMENTS BY GOF OFFICIALS ON THIS PACT WOULD BE RESOLVED. AS FOR FO, IT REMAINS ATTACHED TO THE CONTRACTUAL POLICY IN ITS FULLEST SCOPE, AND WILL NOT SIGN CONTRACTS WHICH DO NOT INCLUDE PROGRESSION CLAUSES.

5. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION, BERGERON OPINED THAT THE OBVIOUS INADEQUACY OF THESE ANTI-INFLATION MEASURES SUGGEST TO HIM THAT THEY REPRESENT COMPROMISES HAMMERED OUT BY A GOVERNMENT DIVIDED IN ITS COUNSELS AND UNCERTAIN HOW TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM. AS AN INDICATOR OF WHAT APPEARED TO BE GOF'S HASTY, UNCOORDINATED APPROACH, BERGERON OBSERVED THAT THE MEASURE CONCERNING ADVANCE PAYMENT OF INCOME TAX MIGHT WELL MEET A CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE ON THE GROUND OF UNEQUAL TREATMENT.

6. THOUGH FO HELD ONLY TRADE UNION PRESS CONFERENCE DEALING WITH THIS SUBJECT, OTHER UNIONS REACTED WITH INDIVIDUAL STATEMENTS, AS FOLLOWS: CGT TERMED GOF'S ANTI-INFLATION "PLAN" SCANDALOUS, POINTED TO GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY, AND ASKED WHO HAD PROFITED, WHO HAD SUFFERED. CFDT DENOUNCED MEASURES AS AUSTERITY PLAN AIMED EXCLUSIVELY AT WORKERS. CFTC WONDERED HOW LABOR COULD BE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 PARIS 07383 252224Z

ASKED TO FOREGO A SHARE IN THE 3.8 PERCENT GROWTH STILL BEING PREDICTED FOR THE FRENCH ECONOMY IN 1974.

7. COMMENT. FOLLOWING CONFERENCE, RAYMOND GELLY OF L'HUMANITE WHO, TOGETHER WITH OTHER LABOR REPORTERS (AJIS) WAS GUEST OF FO AT LUNCH, ASKED BERGERON WHAT ACTION FO PLANNED IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM OF DECLINING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND POSSIBILITY OF AUTHORITARIAN REGIME. BERGERON SAID THAT, AS TRADE UNION, FO

PLANNED NO POLITICAL ACTION. UNSPOKEN BUT APPARENT IN THIS EX-CHANGE WAS FACT THAT THE TWO MEN SAW THE THREAT AS COMING FROM DIFFERENT QUARTERS - BERGERON FROM THE LEFT, GELLY FROM THE RIGHT.

8. BERGERON'S WARNING REGARDING THE DECLINE OF FRANCE'S POLITICAL INSITUATIONS, THE POSSIBLE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF GALLOPING INFLATION, AND AN ALLEGED DIVISION WITHIN A GOVERNMENT UNEQUAL TO THE TASK OF DEALING WITH IT, ARE FAMILIAR CONCLUSIONS OF BERGERON'S ANALYSIS OF FRANCE'S CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION. HE SEES INFLATION MORE AS A POLITICAL THAN AN ECONOMIC MENACE.
STONE

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRETARY GENERAL, POLICIES, INFLATION, POLITICAL STABILITY, LABOR UNIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS07383
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740064-0286
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740318/aaaaaqgq.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 JUL 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <17 JUL 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CCT: FORCE OUVRIERE PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 21
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, ECON, FR, FORCE OUVRIERE, (BERGERON, ANDRE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005